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Istook Lights Up Tinker Air Force Base

Congressman secures planning and design funds for \$8 million electric substation project

Washington, DC – Rep. Ernest Istook's commitment to Tinker AFB has again been reinforced as he's secured critical funding for much-needed improvements to the base's electrical supply.

An \$8-million project will begin this year to create a new electric substation for the base, starting with \$400,000 for planning and design. The improvements will allow the base to run at full capacity without interruption. The project was originally scheduled not to begin until 2009, but has been moved up to this year at the request of Rep. Istook.

"This is a critical upgrade for Tinker," said Rep Istook. "Right now the base cannot operate at full efficiency because it simply lacks enough steady power. The base often suffers rolling blackouts that temporarily shut down some essential departments. Our military's workforce needs and deserves every necessary tool so they can do their jobs without having to plan on possible power outages."

Material provided by Tinker to Istook reported 15 power outages over a two-year period. One example was a 32-hour outage at the B-2 Software Support Building in October 2002, which cost the facility \$662,000 in downtime. The money to begin the electric substation comes for reprogramming other funds that Istook previously secured, namely \$1.2-million that had been intended for the Oklahoma Air National Guard at Will Rogers International Airport before its mission was changed by the Base Realignment and Closing (BRAC) Commission. Through Istook's efforts, that money was reprogrammed for the energy substation at Tinker AFB.

"Ernest Istook has always been a staunch supporter of Tinker Air Force Base. Congressman Istook has dedicated his efforts to make sure our men and women in uniform have every tool necessary to do their jobs to the best of their ability," said former Tinker AFB Commander General Dick Burpee USAF (Ret.). **"The congressman knows that the security of our country is job one and that investing in the work we do at Tinker is money well spent."**

Istook has been a constant supporter of operations at Tinker AFB. Examples include:

- In 1995 Istook obtained the \$15-million to build a new corrosion control (paint) facility at the base. The facility saved time and taxpayer money by allowing aircraft repaired at Tinker to be repainted on-site instead of being moved across the country for paint work. The new facility has increased efficiency, saved taxpayer money and also created more jobs at Tinker.

- In 2000 he secured \$11.2 million for the long-needed repair of the base's runway that had been built in 1942
- In 2002 Istook joined with Senator Inhofe to procure \$2.2 million for the Maintenance Repair Overhaul Technology Center (MROTC), a public/private partnership being located next to Tinker AFB. The start-up money has already attracted a \$1-billion investment by Boeing, and will create hundreds of high-paying jobs for Oklahomans.